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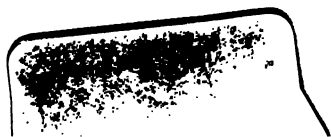
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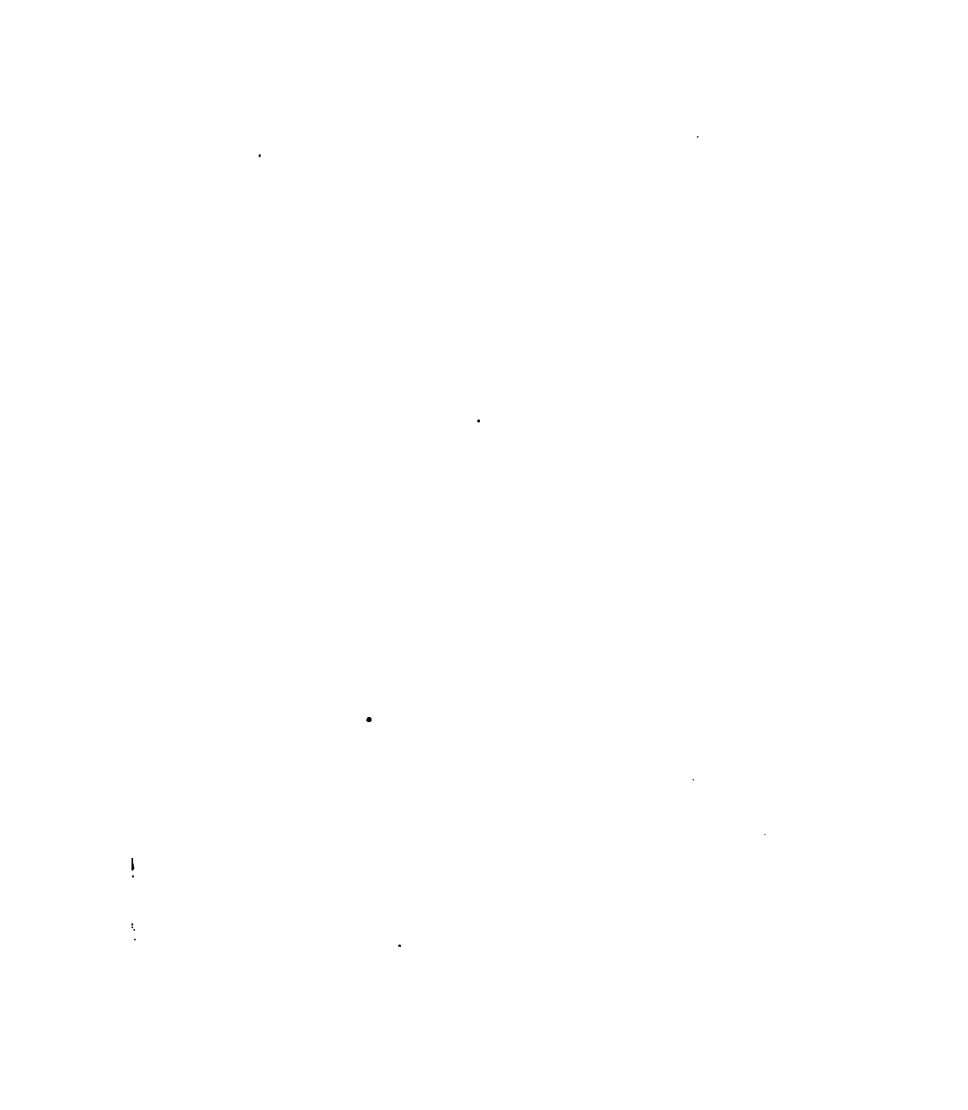
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ISABELLA HAMILTON.

A Tale of the Sixteenth Century.

EDITED BY THE AUTHOR OF

"AIDS TO DEVELOPEMENT." "THE MEMORIALS OF TWO SISTERS."
"GIFT AT CONFIRMATION," &c., &c.

LONDON:

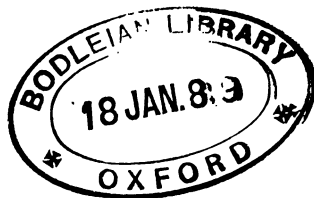
JOHN FARQUHAR SHAW, 27, SOUTHAMPTON ROW,
RUSSELL-SQUARE, AND PATERNOSTER-ROW.

J. ROBERTSON, DUBLIN; J. MENZIES, EDINBURGH.

1852.

11. 8 a.

f. 785.



RICHARD KEYSSELL,
222 LION COURT, FLEET STREET.

PREFACE BY THE EDITOR.

THE Tale of "ISABELLA HAMILTON" was published many years since under a different title; though all the copies of it were sold in a few months, and it has been frequently enquired for since, the Author has never consented to print a Second Edition. The circumstances of the present day, in which the spirit of Archbishop Hamilton is revived, seemed to render its republication now peculiarly appropriate.

The Word of God "which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword," is the weapon which enables the weakest Christian to vanquish and overcome his enemies. It is the distinguishing feature of a true Church that She teaches all her members, from their childhood upwards, to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest" the sacred oracles, whilst the denial of this

blessing to the laity, and the substituting for it the doctrines and commandments of men, is the undoubted sign of a false one.

There may be many who boast themselves of the privilege of being allowed to study their Bible, to whom it may prove but a dead letter, and who, reading it by their own light, make it but an instrument of destruction; but "the true Light" is not less calculated to lead us into all truth, because we wilfully close our eyes to its beams.

Whilst the sentence stands unrepealed "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book;" the controversy with Rome may be reduced to a narrow compass, and the example of Isabella Hamilton may make many a fearful heart strong, for a living instance of a faith that can overcome the world is a far more convincing, and much safer guide, than the most subtle controversy.

The heroine of this little volume, though partly a fi

tious character, is a fair portrait of many who lived in those times of persecution, and hence the Author has not scrupled in the course of the tale to use the very words of the writers and martyrs of those days, and to bring in both the hymns they sung, a sermon, and many passages, from their conversations.

The period in which the story is placed was about a century before the time of the Covenanters. That the spirit of those who counted not their lives dear unto them, so that they might be witnesses for the truth, might be stirred up amongst us more abundantly, and that the perusal of this volume may contribute to that end, is the earnest prayer of the Editor.

ISABELLA HAMILTON.

INTRODUCTION.

ABOUT the middle of the sixteenth century, when the persecution raged with great vehemence against those who professed the doctrines of the Reformation in Scotland, many families of distinction were compelled to leave their native land, and seek refuge either in Italy or Switzerland until the storm had subsided. Amongst such fugitives, was a family intimately connected with one of the pastors of the reformed church, whose diligence and zeal in seeking to advance the cause of true religion, made him a special object of dislike to the Roman Catholic party. No entreaties could prevail on

him to consult his own safety, by retiring awhile from the struggle, though at last, finding it necessary to change his name, he assumed that of his mother's family, by way of concealment.

Some of his children remained with him, whilst the rest fled to Ferrara. Separated from their relatives at home, they eagerly desired intelligence of them, and, from time to time, received accounts of the progress of the reformation.

The letters from Scotland often contained interesting details of the triumphs of the gospel, even in families, from which to human eyes, it appeared an impossibility that trophies of grace could be won.

Among the instances mentioned by one and another of their friends in Scotland, none seemed so remarkable as the history of Isabella Hamilton, transmitted to her sisters in Italy, by Janette Douglas, one of the daughters of the Scotch pastor.

That a relative of the bigotted archbishop of St. Andrews should renounce the faith of her fathers, and be content to give up every worldly prospect, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than aught else, seemed

a most wonderful instance of the sovereignty of grace and the power of the gospel.

The letters respecting her were carefully preserved, together with a document which supplied an account of the latter part of her life; when, as will be seen, in the sequel, it was no longer possible for Janette to communicate with her absent relatives.

Should any be disposed to think that the tale of suffering now laid before them is an exaggerated statement, and that Janette Douglas and her friend were unfaithful recorders of events which came under their own eyes, let them turn to the dark history of those times, and confess that not the half has been told them. Isabella Hamilton's cup of sorrow was light, when compared to that of many of her fellow sufferers, whose names may ever be unknown to the world, but who are now joining with all their martyred brethren in crying with a loud voice from under the altar, "how long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."

The brighter and happier times in which we live should excite deep gratitude in our hearts, as well as an

earnest desire more highly to value the privileges which it cost so much to obtain. Surely they must be deaf indeed, who hear not in the history of past times, a loud call to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and never to give up that, for which the holy men of old were content to suffer "cruel mockings and scourgings," yea, "moreover, bonds, imprisonment, and death" itself.

CHAPTER I.

"There was no bloom of health upon her cheek,
Yet had the glow of youth, with lesser fascination fixed
The gazer's eye.—For, wan the Ladye was, of saintly paleness,
And in the strong beauties of her countenance, there dwelt
Something that was not earthly."

EXTRACTS FROM THE LETTERS OF J. DOUGLAS.

AFTER a morning of anxious watching by the sick bed of a dear friend who lived in the vicinity of Edinburgh, I strolled out to enjoy the fresh breezes of a fine autumnal evening. The grounds surrounding the house were extensive, but being well acquainted with every part of them, I preferred exploring some yet untried walk; and with this intention entered a wood which lay near the road side. My path became winding and intricate, and I soon lost the beaten track. I wandered on, hoping to

escape from the labyrinth in which I was involved, when suddenly I heard a voice at no great distance. I approached the place from whence the sound proceeded, and obtained a sight of the person who had uttered them, whilst I remained unperceived by her. I was struck with admiration of the lovely creature who was thus presented to my view. She was seated on a fallen tree, and from her whole appearance, I concluded that not more than twenty years could have passed over her head. Traces of deep sorrow were marked on her beautiful countenance, and, whilst intently perusing a small book which lay on her knees, she ever and anon raised her dark expressive eyes to heaven, and appeared in earnest communion with an unseen Friend. At length she clasped her hands in ecstasy, and with the tears rolling down her cheeks—exclaimed—

“A life of scorn for me Thou didst lead,
And in the grave laidst Thy blessed head,
Then think of me, who undauntedly
Would lay down life and all for Thee.”

This burst of feeling seemed to relieve her, and in a few minutes, she uttered aloud in a calm voice—“Oh, my Saviour, I have deeply sinned against Thee! I have tried to serve Thee and mammon; but Thou knowest

that I have never felt peace, since I stifled the voice of conscience, and entered into a sinful compliance with the world. Oh, receive again, I beseech Thee, Thy returning child; take me body, soul, and spirit, and crucify my all on that cross where Thou didst nail the handwriting of ordinances that was against me. Thou knowest all the trials which await me, if I again avow myself a believer in Thee, and in Thy precious word; but only clothe me in Thine armour, and I will not fear the hottest battle; only go with me, and I will gladly walk through fire, knowing that it will not kindle upon me, and through water, assured that it shall not overwhelm me. Thou didst strengthen the noble army of martyrs—strengthen *me*, oh my God! yea, *command* strength for me.—Oh! let not my hope be in vain; let me never be put to confusion, but in all time of my tribulation, remember and deliver me!”

As soon as the voice ceased, I almost unconsciously commenced repeating those beautiful words which have inspired many a persecuted and fainting heart amongst the wilds of Caledonia.

I.

He that doth in the secret place
Of the Most High reside,
Under the shade of Him, that is
Th' Almighty, shall abide.

II.

I, of the Lord my God will say
He is my refuge still,
He is my fortress, and my God,
And in Him trust, I will.

III.

Assuredly He shall thee save,
And give deliverance
From subtle fowler's snare, and from
The noisome pestilence.

IV.

His feathers shall thee hide, thy trust
Under His wing shall be,
His faithfulness shall be a shield
And buckler unto thee.

V.

Because on Me he set his love,
I'll save and set him free,
Because My great name he hath known,
I will him set on high.

VI.

He'll call on Me, I'll answer him ;
I will be with him still,
In trouble to deliver him,
And honour him I will.

The countenance of the stranger assumed an air of extreme fear, when the sound first reached her, for not till then, was she aware that any one was near her. As I proceeded, however, her face was illuminated with joy, and her tearful, yet beaming eyes assured me, that that was no unwelcome sound, which spoke to her of encouragement and victory.

As soon as I had finished she arose, and turned her steps to the direction from whence the sounds had proceeded. I advanced to meet her, and offering my hand, confessed that I had been an unintentional, though not an uninterested, witness of the surrender which she had made of herself, to Him, who, I trusted, was my Saviour, as well as hers.

Taking my hand in hers, she emphatically exclaimed —“How unsearchable are the ways of the Lord!—I came into this wood an hour ago—alone and dejected—oppressed by various feelings, yet quite determined to give up all for Christ, and to rejoice that I should be considered worthy to suffer for His sake. I knew that in doing so, I must be content to bear persecutions and afflictions; must stand alone as to earthly associates, though rich in the possession of His love, who sticketh closer than a brother. *Now*, the Lord has sent me a friend, for He has, I believe, directed your way to me, in order that there may, at least, be *one*, who will not load me with reproaches, but who will love me for the sake of our Lord. Oh, how tenderly does my Father deal with His erring child!”

“I am thankful for having been guided hither, my dear young friend, and shall rejoice if I can be of any service

to you. You seem in trouble,—tell me if I can afford you any help or comfort?”

“Yes,” she replied, “I am in trouble—I am very young and inexperienced, am placed in trying circumstances, and need much the advice of one who has been more perfectly instructed in the way in which I desire to walk. I want direction, and I know no one who is able to understand or feel for me, since all my connexions are either engrossed in the vanities of the world, or encased in bigotry and superstition. My history is a strange one; will it tire you to hear how the Lord has led one of the weakest and most rebellious of His children to Himself, and determined her to come out and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing?”

“No,” I answered; “I shall truly rejoice to hear of a fresh instance in these troublous times, of His love, who wins even the most rebellious hearts, and draws them to Himself.”

“Will you then, meet me here to-morrow, at this hour? for my time is now expired, and I dare not awaken suspicion by remaining any longer from home.”

“We can at least” I said, “walk back together, for I have lost the path, and know not my way out of the wood.”

“You are not far from the beaten track; and there we must separate, as I dare not be seen in your company, lest I should be watched, and prevented from enjoying what would otherwise be a great comfort to me.”

“Be it so then, I shall meet you here at the time you have appointed.—The Lord bless and support you.”

“And you, also,” she replied, “whom He has so graciously sent to me in this time of deep trouble—remember in your prayers—Isabella Hamilton.” So saying, she struck into another path, and soon vanished from my sight.

CHAPTER II.

" H^E, though on earth He seems to move,
Must glide in air, like gentle dove;
From yon unclouded depth above
Must draw His purer breath;
Till men behold His angel face,
All radiant with celestial grace:
Martyr all o'er, and meet to trace
The lines of Jesus' death."

THE name of Hamilton awakened in my mind many reflections;—I well knew that the high-born prelate of that name was strongly opposed to the doctrines of the Reformation; and I had little doubt that the trials at which Isabella had hinted, arose from the difference between her religious opinions and those of the rest of her family.

All I had seen of this young creature, had deeply interested me; and I longed for the appointed hour to

arrive, when I should again meet with her, and hear from her own lips the source of her trouble.

I had not been long in the wood, before she joined me. A holy calm sat on her previously agitated countenance; she seemed as one to whom the Lord had spoken peace;—and who then could cause trouble? After a few words had passed between us, Isabella requested me to let her know who it was that had been so providentially cast in her way, the preceding evening.

“My real name,” I replied “is Janette Douglas; but, on account of the very active part which my dear Father takes in propagating the doctrines of the Reformation, we have been obliged to assume that of Grant. You have, of course, heard of the barbarous execution of one *Walter Mill*, whose age and extreme mildness of character we expected would have screened him from the shafts of violence. But the Lord ordered it otherwise;—He who errs not, had commanded that His servant should enter into rest, by the fiery path of persecution. His Saviour was, however, with him to the end,—stood by him at the judgment hall,—and enabled him, though bowed down beneath the weight of upwards of four-score years, to declare, so unflinchingly, the merits of that blood by which alone sinners can be accepted in the sight of a

holy God—that all his enemies were silenced, and not one of his judges would pronounce the sentence of death on the venerable man.* A wretch was at length found, who was base enough to execute the diabolical plot, and my beloved Uncle (for such, by marriage, was the relationship he bore to me) was committed to the flames, and then received his unfading crown, in the land where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

“This outrageous act† served but to enkindle the minds of the people, who became increasingly eager to know more of that faith, which could enable them also to meet death with holy joy, and embrace even the stake with unshaken fortitude. The reformed ministers were in great request; and my dear Father, under the disguised name of Grant, boldly proclaimed the truth as it is in Jesus; and assisted by his dear companions, Paul Methven and Harlow, even went so far as to administer the sacraments.

“Each day since that time, fresh numbers have flocked to the standard of the cross; so that it may be said of Walter Mill, like one of old, ‘Those which he slew at

* Historical fact.

† W. Mill was the first martyr who was burnt alive, in Scotland.

his death, were more than all they which he slew in his life.' Yes, and the glorious cause shall go on; Scotland shall be given as a part of that promised 'inheritance' which shall enrich the possessions of the Lord Jesus. He must prevail, for he is the 'King of kings,' the All-powerful Lord; and He will 'beat down the nations under him, and the people under his feet.' Then shall 'Zion shout,' yea, the redeemed ones shall sing for joy; 'their now wasted bones shall flourish like an herb,' 'for the hand of the Lord shall be known toward His servants, and His indignation toward His enemies.' Were it not for this hope, our hearts would fail us for fear, whilst we see one and another of our warmest advocates either banished from their native country, or left to pine away in wretched dungeons. Lord Erskine of Dun is seized and imprisoned; and, last night, the news reached us that some others of the noble earls, who belong to our party, are banished, by order of the unprincipled queen-regent, who has now thrown off the mask she has hitherto worn, and openly avowed her determination, forcibly to suppress the Reformation.'"*

"Yes," replied Isabella, "but that is not all; I heard

* See M'Crie's *Life of Knox*.

my Uncle declare, with triumph, that the princes of Lorraine, the ambitious brothers of the regent, have formed a plan to set up the claim of our young Queen Mary to the crown of England; to attack Elizabeth, and wrest the sceptre from her hands, under the pretext of her being a heretic; and to commence their operations by suppressing the Reformation, and establishing the French influence in Scotland.* Their scheme has, however, been mercifully disappointed; for news has reached us, this week, that the plot was discovered by that indefatigable reformer, Knox; who, though an exile, does not cease to employ his efforts for the advancement of religion in his native land. He wrote to Secretary Cecil, to acquaint him with this discovery; so that we may still hope, that He who 'stayeth His rough wind, in the day of His east wind,' will put it into the heart of the English queen, to send assistance to her persecuted brethren. It is true, we are not ignorant of Elizabeth's selfish and narrow policy; but we must, on this account, be the more earnest in besieging the throne of grace, that her heart may be turned in sympathy towards us, and that speedy help may be granted."

* See M'Crie's Life of Knox.

"In the Lord's time, doubt not," I answered, "that Scotland will take her place and name amongst the Protestant countries. Some help will certainly be sent to our relief, and we shall, in the end, be surely 'made glad for the days wherein we have been afflicted, and for the years wherein we have seen evil.' Even to-day we have received the cheering intelligence that Knox and Willock are on their way back; to promote, by their presence, the cause which is so dear to them.

"But now, Isabella, let me ask for the fulfilment of the promise you gave me yesterday; and request some account of the manner in which a relative (for such I suppose you are) of one of the most determined opposers to the truth, has been led out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel."

"Yes," replied Isabella, "I am a niece of Archbishop Hamilton—the youngest daughter of his favourite mother. Early in life we were suddenly deprived of our father's care and love—and my Mother thankfully accepted a home in his eldest brother's house. He evinced the deepest interest in our welfare, and has ever treated us, as if we were his own children. When about seventeen, my dear Mother was seized with a very malignant fever, and it was not considered safe for me to

remain in the house. A maiden sister of my Uncle's consented to receive me, and I was immediately removed to Glasgow, where she resided—little suspecting what mercy the Lord had in store for me. Oh, the depth of the wisdom and love of God!

“The exceeding kindness and gentleness of my Aunt won my love, and my happiest hours were those which I spent by her couch—for she was suffering from an affection of the spine, which obliged her to remain constantly in a recumbent position. I felt that there was a great difference between this dear friend and any of those companions with whom I associated at Edinburgh; and I often puzzled myself to find out what it was which made my Aunt so very patient and cheerful under the severest pain. But being ignorant of that source, from whence she drew all the lovely qualities which I so much admired in her, the only satisfactory answer I could give myself was, that my Aunt must be a very good Papist, and would surely get to heaven without suffering much in purgatory.

“Miss Hamilton often talked very beautifully to me about Jesus, who she said, ‘came into the world to save sinners,’ and on whom alone she trusted for salvation.

She never mentioned the Virgin, or any of the saints. Jesus, she said was the only Saviour—her blessed Redeemer. She often told me that she was not afraid to die, because she knew her sins were pardoned by the blood of Christ. You may suppose how great was my astonishment at hearing these truths, which my Aunt from time to time unfolded to my mind. I questioned and reasoned, but her answers always seemed much more satisfactory than my objections. Many delightful conversations did we have, till no subject interested me so much as that of religion, and I longed exceedingly to be like her, and to look only to the Lord Jesus as *my* Saviour and *my* trust.

“Sometimes this dear friend would relate to me the histories of those who had waded through blood for the testimony of Jesus; and then she would tell me that if I ever avowed myself a believer in Him, I, too, must expect to meet with persecution, and, perhaps, with death itself.

“There was one martyr, of whom my Aunt could never speak without strong emotions, so that for some time I was afraid to ask much about him; but at length, I begged her, if it would not excite her too much, to tell

me something about *Patrick Hamilton*. My request was willingly complied with, but I need not repeat the tale I heard of his exertions and sufferings, since you Janette, are, of course, well acquainted with both."

"Oh, yes," I replied, "no Scotch Protestant can be ignorant of *his* name and deeds, who was the first means of declaring to his ignorant countrymen the way of salvation, through a crucified Saviour; but, tell me, Isabella, why your Aunt always manifested such deep feeling when his name was mentioned?"

"Miss Hamilton was educated, in the strictest sense of the word, a Roman Catholic, but when paying a visit to her distant relative Patrick Hamilton, whose mind, unknown to her, had just become enlightened with the truth; she was brought into contact for the first time in her life with a Bible Christian. He laboured to convince her of her errors, and at length succeeded in leading her to the only Saviour of sinners. She accompanied him and his family to the Continent,* where they became intimately acquainted with Luther and Melancthon; and the rapid progress which my beloved Aunt made in heavenly knowledge astonished all who knew her. Her bodily

* See M'Crie's Account of Patrick Hamilton.

health, however, sank under the influence of a climate so different to that to which she had been accustomed, and she was seized with the complaint from which she never recovered.

“After spending nearly two years abroad, they returned home—Patrick, to seal with his blood the doctrines he undauntedly proclaimed—and my Aunt, to give a more silent testimony during years of suffering, to the truth of that religion ‘which endureth all things.’

“She heard the last sermon which he preached before he was decoyed to St. Andrews, by Cardinal Beaton; and she, also, was one of the immense multitude, who witnessed his martyrdom, and heard the memorable words with which he resigned his parting breath. How long, Oh Lord, shall darkness cover this realm! How long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!”*

“Did your Aunt ever give you any particulars of that sermon, for I have heard it was a most extraordinary one?”

“Oh, yes,” answered Isabella, “and I was never tired of hearing the extracts of it which she committed to paper,

* See M'Crie's Account of Patrick Hamilton.

one especially, which is to this day a source of comfort to me in the midst of trouble. After urging his hearers to bear the cross, and leave all and follow Christ, he exclaimed with holy joy, 'Welcome! Welcome! sweet cross of Christ, I verily think the chains of my Lord Jesus are all overlaid with pure gold. When I look over beyond the line and beyond death, to the laughing side of the world, I triumph and ride upon the high places of Jacob; but I am often borne down and hungry in waiting for the marriage supper of the Lamb. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!' After continuing awhile in this strain, he concluded his sermon with the following touching appeal;—'I call heaven and earth to witness against you if I have drawn not up a fair contract of marriage betwixt you and Christ; if I have been not with offers betwixt the Bridegroom and you; and your conscience has borne you witness, and your mouths confess that there have been many fair trysts and meetings drawn on betwixt Christ and you; there have been bracelets, and jewels, rings, and love-letters, sent you by the Bridegroom; it has been told you what a fair dowry ye should have; and what a fair house ye and your husband should dwell in; and what was the *Bridegroom's* excellency, sweetness, might and power; the

eternity and glory of His kingdom; the exceeding deepness of His love, who sought His black wife through pains, fires, death and the grave, and swimmèd the salt sea for her, undergoing the curse of the law, and made a curse for you. And then ye consented and said, ‘Even so we take him.’ Oh, then, Sirs, I beseech you, hing on Christ—your feast is not far off—ye shall be filled ere ye go; there is as much in our Lord’s pantry as will satisfy all His bairns, and as much wine in His cellar as will quench all their thirst: hunger on, for there is meat for hunger in Christ; go never from him, but fash him with a dishful of hungry desires, till He fill you; if He delay, yet come ye not away, albeit ye fall aswoon at His feet. Oh, Sirs, I beseech you, help me to praise my Lord Jesus!—I would I could get Him set on high! To Him, and to His rich grace, I commend you. I pray for you—pray for me.”

“These were his concluding words; and truly it might be said of him, like the first martyr, all that sat in that house of God ‘looking steadfastly on him, saw his face, as it had been the face of an angel.’ When the last benedictory prayer was offered, the intense fervour with which he commended his beloved hearers to Him who rideth above the storm and tempest, seemed but a

touching omen of the occurrence which took place on the following day. Blessed Patrick Hamilton! Oh for grace to follow in thy steps! But," continued she with much alarm, "how the time has flown!—I am too late and must hasten home, and leave the remainder of my history till another day. Farewell, dear friend! let us meet to-morrow."

CHAPTER III.

"Say not it dies, that glory,
'Tis caught unquenched on high,
Those saint-like brows, so hoary,
Shall wear it in the sky."

No smile is like the smile of death,
When all good musings past ;
Rise wafted with the parting breath,
The sweetest thought—the last."

At the appointed hour we again met, when Isabella thus continued her tale.

"From the great scarcity of Bibles in our country, the copy which my Aunt had procured on the continent was an invaluable treasure. It was carefully concealed during the day, but at the dead hour of night, all her most intimate associates would assemble round her bed, and read to their sick friend the precious word of life.

“ I was not aware of this practice for some time, and did not even know that there was such a book as the Bible, but as soon as my Aunt found that my prejudices were much shaken, and that I was really interested in religion, she invited me to join the little company in her room. Oh, Janette, never shall I forget that night.

“ The silence of the midnight hour was scarcely broken by the suppressed and gentle tones in which one and another would declare to her companions the message which had been sent them through the written word of God. The thickly shaded lamp would not allow me sufficient light to trace the different features of the group by which I was surrounded ; but, indeed, had I been able to gratify my curiosity, I should have felt no disposition to do so when once the all-absorbing volume was opened. My Aunt requested her friend, Mrs. Graham, to read the fourteenth chapter of St. John’s Gospel. I felt quite bewildered as she proceeded, at the display of love and tenderness manifested in every word contained in that precious chapter, and I wondered that any heart could feel troubled when Jesus had said, that there was no cause for disquietude, for though He was about to withdraw His bodily presence from them, He would still come to His people, and make His abode with them, and

would send a Comforter to console them. Many sweet remarks were made on the verses, and when Mrs. Graham had finished, she asked one Marion Macnaught to read the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews.—Oh, how was my soul fired with the description of those ‘of whom the world was not worthy,’—those who were ‘slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held!’ and I thought that I would imitate them, and openly confess Him for whom I then felt a new and ardent love. Ah, foolish worm! I made this resolution in the pride of my heart, and dreamt not that it could not secure my soul in the hour of temptation.

After several other sweet and encouraging chapters had been read, we all knelt down, and my Aunt made known the wants and desires of the little group, to Him who has promised that where two or three are met in His name, He will be with them, to bless them. She did not forget *me*, in that prayer; and oh, how it was answered!

“Before her friends retired, she addressed a few appropriate words to each, and then took leave of all, with these words,—‘Peace I leave with you. *My* peace I give unto you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.’ Then, turning to me, she said, ‘Good night, Isabella, my love. I pray God that you,

like Moses, may esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than aught beside, and choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin, for a season.'

"I retired, but not to sleep; for my mind was too much filled with what had passed to allow me any rest. I determined just to cast my whole soul on Christ, and give myself up to Him in the way my Aunt had often urged me to do. I asked Him if he would receive one so vile and so weak. I told Him all I felt and all I feared; I confessed my sins, and implored Him just to tell me that he would hear me, and be gracious to me. I do not know how long I went on praying, for I felt I must have an answer, or I could get no rest; but this I know, that, long before I rose from my knees, I had that promise most deeply impressed on my mind,—'*Whatsoever* ye ask, in *my* name, I will do it.' And I took Jesus at His word, and believed that He heard even my prayers.

"Week after week rolled on, each one bringing me nearer to the time when I must leave my beloved friend, who had become dearer than life to me; and return to a home where I knew many trials would now await me. Still I rejoiced in God my Saviour, and was able to resign myself entirely into His hands.

“About a month after the ever-memorable night before mentioned, I received the news that my dear Mother had nearly recovered from the lingering illness which the fever had left, but that my eldest sister had been seized with the same complaint, and that no hopes were entertained of her life; and that, in consequence of this, I must remain still longer at Glasgow. I was tenderly attached to Adamina, and deeply felt these afflicting tidings; though I sincerely rejoiced that I was not yet called to leave my dear Aunt, whose health was rapidly declining. She felt that she had not long to live, and often expressed a wish that I could be with her to the last of her few remaining days. Alas! that sad time was far nearer than I had expected; and very soon was I to see the truth of that word, as fulfilled in her case, — ‘Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, yet will I fear no evil, for Thou art with me.’

“On one of the evenings in which we were expecting our friends, I thought that she seemed much worse, and I tried to dissuade her from hearing any reading that night; but she would not listen to my remonstrances, as she said it would much refresh her to hear the Word of God. At midnight, all the doors being closed, we assembled; when my Aunt was to

listen, for the last time, to those precious promises which had been her stay and support, through years of suffering. At her request, the two last chapters in the Revelations were read. Her countenance was radiant with joy; and when the concluding verse was finished, she clasped her wasted hands, and exclaimed, ‘Aye, Lord Jesus, quickly—oh, come quickly!’ Then, calling her friends by name, she addressed them,—‘Alice, dear, trust in the Lord; I know the troubles which compass you around; but just take them all to Christ,—leave them with Him,—but never take them again on yourself, after you have put them in His hands. He will bear them all for you. Oh! don’t be afraid,—try the Everlasting arms to the utmost,—they’ll never sink or shake under your heaviest load.—Cast ALL your care on God.’

“‘And you, my dear friend, Mrs. Graham, I call on you to help me to praise my Lord Jesus; He has always been better to me than all my fears,—a very strong hold, in the time of trouble. We shall not be long separated,—hold on to the end, which cannot be far off to either of us. I long for the everlasting rest; and ‘confess to you, I am like a bird on the wing, and I would fain be at Emmanuel’s land, where the tree of life is. Aye, I will soon

get the white robes, the crown on my head, and the palms in my hands.'

" 'The Lord bless you, dear Marion! Your light affliction shall be but for a moment; and then—then, the *exceeding, eternal, weight* of glory!—oh, my child! don't fear anything, whilst you have such a friend as Jesus. In His care I leave you!'

" 'Jean, my love, the beams of my house are cracking, —I am laying down my tabernacle, to be built again.' Death is not terrible,—it is unstinging; Jesus has borne the curse. Rejoice in the Lord; weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. It is but a little, and we'll all be in that rest. It is but a little, and we'll all get Himself. We'll see Him face to face, without sin.'

" Many more words of comfort did she address to the rest of her weeping friends, until quite exhausted. They stood around her bed to take the last look at one so dear to them; and then were about to retire, when her voice was again heard.—'Oh, glory dwells in Emmanuel's land! When will I hear Him just say—'Arise my love, my fair one, and come away.' Lord Jesus, why are Thy chariot wheels so long in coming? Oh, fetch me home;

come, and take me by the hand, that I stumble not in the dark valley of death. I will soon be with my Lord—will soon be in the bosom of Him who carries the lambs in His arms. I will be satisfied when I wake up in Thy likeness; come——Jesus.’——Here her voice became too low for us to hear what she said, though her lips continued to move for some time.

“ Her friends now thought it best to leave her awhile, and, therefore, withdrew, whilst I remained watching by her. Before long, she opened her eyes, and on finding we were alone, she thus gave vent to her feelings. ‘ Beloved Isabella, my affection for you is such that my body would quite sink, to speak what is on my heart, of love to you. I desire for you to become more and more acquainted with my dearest Lord. Oh, serve Him—study to know more and more of Him—live in communion with Him—never rest till you get eternal communion with Him—follow on, through the waste howling wilderness, just leaning on the Lord. Oh, my precious child, never—never give up Christ. Be stedfast—be faithful unto death, and you will have a crown of life. You must be a gem in the sparkling crown which shall shine around our Emmanuel’s brow; yea, a polished jewel, chosen, and called, and sanctified. I give you my Bible; you

know the need of secrecy—but study it often; the more you read it, the more precious it will be to you.—Jesus will never leave you, dearest Isabella. I am going, but He remaineth with you. I'll soon be in glory—follow on my love, and we'll meet again in the 'higher house,' and sing His praise together. Oh, Lord Jesus,' she faintly said, 'I commend my child to Thee; take her—comfort her—uphold her, and be very near her!'

"An hour after this, when the soft rays of the morning sun broke into the chamber, she whispered, 'Bright Sun of Righteousness, 'when will I be admitted to see Thy clear and perfect glory, instead of the cloudy light of a created sun?' Arise, shine! Oh, Isabella, Christ is so *very, very* precious! I long to be with Him; for I want to praise His love.'

"She lay motionless for some time; and then suddenly exclaimed—'praise!—glory!—going home!' She raised her arms, as if to throw herself into the embrace of a beloved friend; and with a strength which astonished me, shouted 'victory! victory! through Jesus *my* Saviour!' Then letting them fall, an ecstatic smile spread itself over her features, and her happy spirit was borne into the presence of her Lord. I hung over the precious remains in tearless agony. Death, for the first time, was presented

before me; and how had every terror been taken from it; it seemed such a beautiful thing, that I could not comprehend why any one should fear its approach. It was but giving up the soul into the hands of One who loved and cared for it; it was just closing the eyes on the world, to open them in visions of God, and of the Lamb; but yet, this Death had taken from me my dearest earthly treasure, and when I turned my distracted thoughts on the irreparable loss I had sustained, my agony seemed too great to bear, and I sank down in unconsciousness.

“ I know not how long I remained in this state, but from it I was at length aroused by the tender voice of my Aunt’s chosen friend Mrs. Graham, who had entered the room unperceived by me, ‘ Isabella, my love,’ said she, ‘ do not let your thoughts dwell so entirely on these cold remains; the spirit is not here—for I behold, and lo! a great multitude is standing before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands! A fresh burst of the new song has just been poured forth; and a new harp has just struck its golden chords, to the same ascription of praise; and another crown has just been cast at the feet of Jesus! And who is it that is arrayed in the garments of salvation? Even our beloved one! who being saved by the blood of the

Lamb, is now before His throne, seeing His face. Look *up*, then, with the eye of faith, and rejoice in her joy; rejoice that all tears are now wiped for ever from the eyes of our once suffering friend, and that she is now where she has so ardently longed to be.'

"Then approaching the window, across which, she slowly drew the curtain; solemnly uttering these words:—

Now, as for her, she Thine own face
In righteousness doth see,
And with Thy likeness, when I wake,
I satisfy'd shall be !

"But I cannot dwell longer on this scene; suffice it to say, that my beloved Aunt was buried by a Protestant minister, for whom she had long entertained a high regard. The service, as usual, was performed at midnight, to prevent interruption. Dear Mrs. Graham was most tender to me. She soothed me with the only true consolation, and made me feel that I had an earthly friend still left, who could counsel and direct my steps.

"But soon, alas! was this saint also to be taken from me, for in a few weeks she was re-united to her friend in that land, where partings are unknown, and where they are together praising Him whose love was ever the dear theme of their conversation below. Before this took

place I had rejoined my family, and was separated for ever in this world, from the little band of Protestant Christians to whom my Aunt had introduced me."

Perceiving that Isabella was quite overcome by her affecting recital, I urged her to leave the rest of her history until another time; and after some conversation, we separated.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Weep not for her ! she is an angel now,
And treads the sapphire floors of paradise ;
All darkness wiped from her refulgent brow ;
Sin, sorrow, suffering, banished from her eyes ;
Victorious over death, to her appears
The visted joys of Heaven's eternal years :
Weep not for her !

Weep not for her ! there is no cause of woe ;
But rather nerve *thy* spirit, that it walk
Unshrinking o'er the thorny path below,
And from earth's low defilements keep thee back ;
So, when a few fleet, swerving years have flown,
She'll meet thee at heaven's gate, and lead thee on :
Weep not for her ! ”

ALTHOUGH,” continued Isabella, at our next interview, from the distance which separated them, and his numerous engagements, scarcely any intercourse had subsisted tween my Uncle and his Sister, for many years ; yet I

was well aware that the news of her death would occasion him real sorrow. But, ere these sad tidings had reached him, his heart had received a deeper wound, in the loss of my dear Sister, who fell a victim to the fever by which I told you she had been attacked, after her long and close attendance on our dear Mother.

“ At the end of about a fortnight, my old nurse was sent to convey me from Glasgow to our country seat, near Edinburgh; where I was again to be united to my family, after a separation of nearly a twelvemonth. As we proceeded on our journey, I asked Margaret many questions about all that had happened since I left home; but more especially did I desire to hear every circumstance which related to my dear Sister Adamina.

“ ‘ Ah! my dear young lady, little did auld Margaret Craig ever think to see the sorrow that has come upon the noble family of the Hamiltons. Bad enough would it have been to see the eldest daughter, with her beautiful eyes closed in death; but oh! oh! that was nothing, when one comes to think about her dying under the curse of the holy church, without confession, or absolution, or anything to do good to her precious soul!’

“ ‘ Adamina die under the curse of the church!—what can you mean, nurse?’ I exclaimed, in amazement;—‘ *she*

who was always so devotedly attached to all its forms and doctrines !’

“ ‘ No wonder that you should be shocked, dear Miss Isabella ; but, by the blessed Virgin, I don’t deceive you ; and you shall hear all the sad story now, for you must not ask my master or mistress about it, as they are both quite broken down with the heavy stroke.—Dear hearts, may our kind Ladye comfort them !’

“ With almost breathless attention did I listen, whilst nurse proceeded,—‘ About six weeks after Miss Adamina was took ill with the fever, as I was sitting by her, her Uncle came into the room, and gently kissing her pale cheek, whispered,—‘ My dear child, you are very ill,—the doctors give no hope of your recovery ; shall I, therefore, send at once for Father Leslie to confess you ?’ Oh, Miss Isabella, I will never forget your Sister’s look, as she lifted up her bright blue eyes, and smiling in her own way upon master, said, ‘ No, thank you, dearest Uncle ; I have already confessed my sins to the only Priest who can give me absolution, and I do not want to see another.’

“ ‘ Adamina ! my child !’ exclaimed my master, who turned very pale, and I believe hardly knew what he said, —‘ What ?—what is this I hear—the *priest* not able to give you absolution !—already confessed !’—then he turned

to me, and said, 'She is delirious, nurse.' At that word, weak as she was, Miss Adamina raised herself, and looking very solemn, said, 'No, dear Uncle, I am not delirious; I know I am dying, and I know I am a very great sinner; and, if it had not been for the love of Jesus Christ, I could not have been so happy as I am,—but He came into the world to save poor sinners, and I believe that He will save me, and will soon take me to be with Him in glory. You, dear Uncle, have always thought me a good and dutiful child, but indeed I have been a great sinner;—I hav'n't thought about God,—I hav'n't loved Him.—I hav'n't honoured Him;—but He has loved me, for His Son's dear sake, and has forgiven all my sins. Oh, I am so very happy,—and I should be *quite* happy, if I could just think that my beloved friends would know and love my Saviour. Dear Uncle,' she said, coaxingly, 'I am going away from you,—won't you promise me one little thing;—I can't bear to think that I shall never see you again;—oh, do believe your dying niece,—that 'Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the only way by which poor sinners can be saved: do seek that way, and then I am sure you will find——' Oh, Miss Isabella, I wish I could remember all she said,—but there were some things I couldn't understand, and so forgot them. She talked

about not praying to the Virgin, or the saints; and she asked my master to be kind to those who thought as she did, and not have them burnt or killed, as he had done, —and a great many other things. She went on till she fainted quite away. Poor master left the room, when she stopt talking, looking more dead than alive. He never came near her the rest of the day; but the next morning, in he comes to her room, and Father Leslie along with him. I trembled very much for the poor dear, who was so ill; for I thought it would hurt her. They talked to her a long time, till they both got quite angry; though Miss Adamina was as calm as possible, and answered all their questions so well, that they often had not a word to say. At last they got up and went away, without saying so much as a kind word. I thought this very odd, but didn't venture to say anything. As soon as they had left, I heard my dear young lady speaking out loud, as if she was talking to some one; and I heard her say something about a 'Faithful God,' and 'being strengthened.' I could not tell what she meant; for surely, thinks I, *she* is weak enough,—she need not talk of strength, whoever does.

“A few days after, my master came again, with another priest, but all to no purpose; they couldn't make Miss Adamina say anything different to what she told

them before; so they went off, quite in a rage. Ah, Miss Isabella, fond as I was of the blessed Virgin, and all them holy saints, I could never have found it in my heart to worry a dying creature as they did. True, it often hurt me sadly to hear her say that the prayers of all the saints could do her no good; but then she was happy in what she believed, and I could only hope that all would come right in the end.

“‘Miss Adamina used often to talk of you, Miss, and long to see you again; and then she would pray for you, out loud, so prettily; and she told me to be sure and give you her tender love, and tell you she did not forget you when she was dying: only an hour before she went off, she had your name upon her lips; for I heard her say, ‘Oh, my Saviour! bring my darling Isabella to Thyself, and let us be together with Thee.’

“‘Again and again the priests came to her, but nothing they said moved her; and I often thought there must be something more in her religion than in theirs, because they got so very angry, whilst she was always calm and quiet. The blessed Virgin forgive me such thoughts! but I couldn’t keep them from coming into my head, and especially when I saw dear Miss Adamina so patient under all her sufferings.

“‘She often talked to me about her Saviour; but though I liked to please her, yet I was afraid of listening much, lest my priest should be angry, when it came out at confession.

“‘The day before she died, Father John Hamilton, abbot of Arbroath, came into her room, and asked her if she kept in the same mind as before. ‘Yes,’ she said, ‘I will never deny my dear Saviour; His salvation is all my trust,—and I shall soon be with Him!’ Then the Abbot was very angry, and he said over her that dreadful curse which they use to heretics:—you know what it is, Miss Isabella, so I won’t repeat the words, for they make me tremble even to think upon.

“‘The dear young lady was just as calm as before, which made me wonder; for it was so terrible to hear that sentence. She smiled at me, when we were alone, and said, with such a look of joy, ‘Oh, Margaret, dear, don’t be frightened. They have cast me out of their church,—but I will soon be in the church above, with my own dear Saviour; and you must come too, my kind nurse.’

“‘The next day she died,—so happy, Miss: just before she went off, I saw her lips move, and I put my ear close, and heard these words, ‘Jesus, receive my

spirit!’ I never saw any one die so calm before; and all I can hope is, that the dear young lady is as happy now as she expected she should be after death.’

“I let nurse run on, without once interrupting her narrative; indeed, so overpowered was I, by the new proof of the love of my heavenly Father, in having led this dear Sister to Himself, that my feelings could not find utterance. At length, however, I asked Margaret if she knew what had been the means of changing the opinions once held by Adamina.

“‘Yes, Miss Isabella,’ she replied, ‘I heard your Sister tell her Uncle, one day, when he asked her just that self-same question. She said that, soon after mistress was took ill with the fever, she was walking down one of the back streets of the town, looking for a nurse, to come and sit up by night with her Mamma; when she entered a house to which she had been directed, but found it seemingly empty. She went up stairs, but could find nobody; so she went on and on, up five stories, when she thought she heard voices at the top: so up she went, and found all the people of the house, and many others got together: and one man talking to them. She stayed to listen, and heard him say a great deal about praying to Jesus Christ, instead of to the

Virgin and all the holy saints. Miss Adamina thought it all very strange, but somehow she began to be taken with what the man said, and so she stayed on, till she was obliged to leave; but she never forgot what she heard; and this was not the last time she went to such a place, for when her Mamma was out of danger, Miss Adamina used to walk out every day, as we thought, to take the air; but she afterwards said, that she often went to this house, and joined the 'venticle as was held there, till her dear young head was quite full of those new notions. She never could be persuaded to tell her Uncle where this house was; though, one day, when she thought she was alone, I heard her talking to herself, about the man who, as she said, had showed her the truth. She called him Douglas, and Master knows that he is kin to Walter Mill, who *was* so good, but afterwards turned heretic. Master have often tried to rout the man out; but he never could find him; those men are so cunning, they always manage to be off, just as Master thinks he has got them.'

"You can now understand, dear Janette, the deep interest and emotion I manifested, when I discovered that you were the daughter of him, who was the blessed instrument of convincing my beloved Sister, that there is

none other way of salvation, save in our Lord Jesus Christ.

“But I must hasten on.—I arrived in safety at home, and was most tenderly welcomed by my Uncle and all my dear family. Ah, how little did they then think that their Isabella would soon become the cause of their deepest sorrow!

“I, at first, dreaded being questioned about my Aunt; but all fear soon wore off, when I discovered that my dear Mother’s mind was too much overwhelmed by her recent loss, to think much about anything else: and my Uncle was so fully occupied, in devising schemes to suppress the Reformation, and hunt from their various hiding places, all who took any part in forwarding its doctrines, that his family scarcely ever saw him.

“My sister Annette, indeed, would often ask me to tell her about my beloved relative; and would weep with me, when she found how dearly I had loved, and how deeply I deplored the loss of such a friend.

“But our attention and thoughts were suddenly arrested by an unexpected occurrence, which threw a fresh gloom over our already saddened circle.”

CHAPTER V.

"Our Master's in heaven ; this truth we will bear
On our hearts, and our lips when we seek Him in prayer.
From the cross which He bore, we never will shrink.
Though often-times mourning, and ready to sink ;
And in heaven our Master, the service will own,
And that cross will be changed to a glorious crown !"

"ON my return late one evening from the house of a friend with whom I had been passing some days, I was met by my Sister Annette, who informed me that Malcolm Buchanan, a young ward and relation of my Uncle's had arrived from the Continent, and reached Edinburgh, on the previous evening. ' You will be surprised, Isabella,' added she, ' when I tell you that I have seen little of him, for he has been closetted in my Uncle's study almost ever since he came. I thought this morning, Malcolm looked

sadly at me, and though he was kinder than ever, I saw there was something working in his mind which he did not, as usual, communicate to me. I have strange fears Isabella, for, certainly, Malcolm *does* look very different. He is much grown, and although his manner is unchanged, yet there is often such a deep solemnity cast over his countenance, that I almost tremble to gaze at him."

"We proceeded to the drawing-room, where we remained a long time before Malcolm and my Uncle entered. Annette turned very pale, when she saw the expression of extreme severity, on the brow of the latter, as he silently took the chair next her. After a pause of some minutes, my Mother went up to him, and gently asked if anything had happened to distress him. 'Yes,' answered my Uncle; and then after a while, he added, with great emotion, 'Will you believe me, when I tell you, that this wretched young man has become a cursed heretic! an apostate! This is all the return I have for years of fatherly concern for his welfare.—*This* the recompense for ever treating him as my own child, and for promising, in compliance with his desire, that next summer, Annette should become his wife. Oh, that I had not lived to see this day! Would to God it had been my happiness, to

have cast the sod upon his coffin, or ever he had brought this fresh misery into our family !’

“ Before my Uncle had finished, poor Annette had sank insensible on the floor, from which she was raised by Malcolm, who seemed the only conscious person in the room. When she recovered, she so earnestly entreated that she might be left with her friend for one hour, in order that she might receive an explanation of what she had heard, from his own lips ; that, her request, was unwillingly granted. I should have gone also, but my Sister would not permit me to leave her ; so that I heard the interesting conversation which took place.

“ Malcolm stated his views with great mildness and clearness, though he shunned not to declare to us the whole counsel of God. The words spoken from time to time, by a friend, who had undertaken to teach him Hebrew, were the first means of inducing him seriously to reflect, and that book which he had intended merely to peruse, as the only attainable method of acquiring the ancient language, became to him, in the fullest sense, the word of *life*. Long did he struggle with overwhelming doubts and fears, all of which his beloved friend and teacher, Celio Secundo Curio, strove at once to answer and remove. He would tell him of the wil-

lingness of Jesus to pardon the vilest sinner; and often, too, would he remind him of one who denied his Lord*—of another, out of whom seven devils were cast;† and of another, who seemed as if the cup of his wickedness could not contain one drop more;‡ and yet they were all forgiven through the blood and righteousness of Christ. At length, Malcolm was enabled to receive the truth in the love of it, and the two friends rejoiced together in Him, Whom not having seen, they loved.

“Malcolm had counted the cost, before he determined to give up all for his Saviour; he knew he must resign his Annette—that dearest earthly treasure; but Jesus was more precious to his soul than aught beside; and he was content to have no reserves from Him, who had loved him so as to die for him.

“Annette was very calm whilst Malcolm proceeded, and when he had finished, she replied to all he had said,—touching with the deepest feeling on the subject of their necessary separation, and assuring him that nothing could ever happen which would cause her to regard him with less affection than she had been wont to feel towards him; and that her earnest prayer should be offered

* Mark xiv. 66—72.

† Luke viii. 3.

‡ 2 Chron. 33.

continually on his behalf to the blessed Virgin, who was always mindful of the prayers of the faithful, and who, she doubted not, would in time bring him back to the only true path, from which he had wandered; and that then they might be united together again, and realize all the joys which they had so long reckoned on as their portion. 'But,' added she—almost suffocated with emotion—'my attachment to the faith in which I have been brought up, shall never induce me to let my dearest friend remain in danger. Fly, then, Malcolm, whilst there is time: let this late hour of night cover your retreat; you are not safe a day—no, not an hour in this house; you *know* my Uncle, and, therefore, I beseech you fly immediately, —yet oh, stay one moment, and tell me where you go? — *We* shall not betray you.'

" 'I purpose, dearest Annette,' replied Malcolm, 'to spend the remainder of my days in proclaiming to my ignorant countrymen, the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the knowledge of which I desire should spread over every part of my native land. In accomplishing this design, I know I shall have to endure hardships to which I am totally unaccustomed, but He, who, when on earth, had not where to lay His head, will support and strengthen me. Farewell—Annette, my dearest!'

We shall meet again at the bar of God. Oh, I beseech you, remember what I have said to you this day, and let us meet there, both clothed in whiter garments than would have graced our earthly bridal; both shining brighter than the polished jewels with which a bride adorneth herself;—So let God rejoice over us, yea, even as a bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride; there let us sit together at the marriage supper of the Lamb. And you, Isabella must not be absent in that day. Seek to know the Saviour, about Whom you have been hearing. I leave my Annette to your soothing care. Farewell!—Farewell!’

“Malcolm could add no more; he hurried from the room, and almost unconsciously rising, I followed him into the hall, and taking his hand, as he hastily walked out of the house, whispered—‘Malcolm—be faithful unto death; we *shall* meet in glory;’ he started—but without appearing to notice his amazement—I rapidly continued—‘Malcolm, your Saviour is *mine* also; I have been led to renounce all other Mediators, and to cling to Him as my only hope of Salvation. Praise Him, Malcolm, that one of this family is brought out of darkness into His marvellous light; and continue instant in prayer, that others may be led into all truth.

Adamina is gone before us; she has already beheld the King in His beauty, for she died resting on the One Saviour, in Whom is all our trust. Pray for us, dear Malcolm, and may you be led continually by the Blessed Spirit, and adorn the Gospel you are about to proclaim.

“Malcolm answered not; but the light of a cloudless moon shone over his expressive countenance, and showed how deep were the emotions caused by my abrupt communication. We had reached the end of the lawn before I remembered the danger to which I was thus exposing myself as well as Malcolm. I, therefore, left him, again intreating him to be very expeditious in his retreat from the city, as I well knew he would be pursued.

“I will pass over my return to poor Annette, who, I fear, will never recover the blight she that evening received, to all the fond prospects of happiness in which she had indulged for many years; for, I fear, I have already tired your patience with this long digression.

“The events, however, which I have now related, are so closely interwoven with my own history, that it was needful to make you acquainted in some measure with them.

“Deeply excited by what had passed during the evening, on leaving Annette I retired to my own room, there

to ponder in secret over all I had heard. An overwhelming weight oppressed my spirits, and I felt a conviction that some crisis must be at hand. *What* this might be I knew not! and the more I attempted to rend the veil which concealed the future, the darker and more obscure did it appear. At length, wearied out with all the vague ideas which floated in my mind, I drew my Bible from its place of concealment, and almost unconsciously turning over its leaves, my eye caught the words 'Cast thy burden on the Lord, and He will sustain thee.' I felt their adaptation to my circumstances, and falling on my knees, laid my burden at once on the Lord. I besought Him to prepare me for *whatever* might be before me; to give me strength, and make me faithful to the end; and I felt perfect peace whilst giving myself into His hands, to do with me just as seemed good unto Him. I arose refreshed and comforted; all anxiety respecting the future had ceased, for I felt that I had committed myself to One who was able to preserve me in the right way.

"With my mind thus soothed, I fell asleep, and rising at an early hour the next morning, I again commended myself to the care of my Heavenly Friend, and found a deep satisfaction in putting my hands into the hands of

Christ; beseeching Him to lead me just *where*, and as He would.

“After spending some time in reading portions of the Word of God, I left my room, intending to take a short walk before joining the family. I had hardly crossed the lawn, however, when I heard my Uncle’s voice, and turning round, perceived that he was following me. ‘Isabella, my love,’ said he, ‘have you seen Malcolm this morning? I have been seeking for him everywhere in vain.’ I started, and turned pale. ‘Malcolm! Uncle, do you not know that he left the house last night, as soon as he had parted from Annette.’

“‘Left my house last night, Isabella! and did you know of his intention thus to escape from me?’

“‘I *did*, Uncle,’ I replied, with as much firmness as my agitation would allow me to command; ‘Malcolm told us that he should leave Edinburgh immediately. He knew too well that he was no longer secure here, and that a speedy flight could alone ensure his safety. And do you think, dear Uncle, that we could have urged him to remain, when we knew what was before him if he continued in this house, or even in this city? No, Malcolm is dear to us as a brother, and we, therefore, entreated him to fly. Oh, remember our poor Annette;’

how could she survive, whilst her dearest friend was suffering horrid tortures, imprisonment, and perhaps, at last, death itself!’

“This appeal seemed to produce but a momentary effect on my Uncle. Darting a most searching look at me, he sternly asked if compassion to my Sister was the only reason which had induced me to let one, who was a heretic escape without detention; adding that he had reason, from Father Leslie’s account of me, to suspect, that I might have had other motives in favouring the rebel.

“The temptation not to avow my real sentiments was so strong that I dared not speak, lest, like Peter, I should deny my Lord. I trembled violently, and made no reply. My Uncle then angrily ordered me to meet him in his study after breakfast, when he should compel me to answer his questions. He could not, he said, wait then, as he was anxious to make known Malcolm’s flight, and to despatch his scouts over the country, in hot pursuit of the base heretic, who had thus attempted to elude the justice he so richly deserved. ‘And think not, Isabella,’ he added, ‘that he shall escape. Vengeance—aye a ten-fold vengeance shall fall on his accursed head. Archbishop Hamilton knows too well

how to treat heretics, for you to suppose that even Malcolm shall elude his just displeasure.' Saying these words, he left me. I rushed up to my room, and there in an agony, besought strength for the trial I was about to undergo. I entreated that the unflinching spirit of the first martyr might be granted to me, whatever should be the consequences of the avowal; and such was the gracious answer I obtained, that I was enabled to enter my Uncle's room at the time appointed, with a calmness which even surprised myself, and which formed a strange contrast to my former agitation."

CHAPTER VI.

" Even as a nurse, whose child's imperfect pace
Can hardly lead his foot from place to place,
Leaves her fond kissing, sets him down to go,
Nor does uphold him for a step or two ;
But when she finds that he begins to fall
She holds him up, and kisses him withal.—
So God from man sometimes withdraws his hand
Awhile, to teach his infant faith to stand ;
But when He sees his feeble strength begin
To fail, He gently takes him up again."

" I WILL not weary you, dear Janette," continued Isabella, " with the particulars of the interview which I mentioned, when I saw you last. Suffice it to say, that my Uncle drew from me a full account of all the circumstances of my visit at Glasgow, with which I have already made you acquainted.

“ At first he appeared to treat my views with indifference, and to attribute them merely to excitement, or an over-wrought sensibility ; but he soon saw that it was no childish notion which I had embraced, but that for it I was content to suffer the loss of all things.

“ After many hours of painful argument, mixed with much upbraiding and reproach, my Uncle desired me to retire to my room, and on no account to mix with the family, till I heard further from him.

“ When I looked back on the events of the morning, all seemed ‘ as a dream, when one awaketh,’ and it was long before I could sufficiently gather my scattered thoughts, to pour out my grateful thanks to Him who had been better to me than all my fears. Then I felt that that was a true word which had been spoken,—‘ My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.’ His word, I knew, was a *tried* word ; it had been tried by all the saints and the martyrs, ever since the world began,—tried by them, in sorrow and in joy, and found *faithful*. And now I was confident that I too might repose on it, and find it the same sure and steady rock of strength. All was uncertainty before me, but I just left it with composure,—I cast myself on the *unchanging* love of my Father.

“ I will not detail the severe measures which were used, in order to induce me to deny my Saviour. Months of suffering passed over my head; but, though forsaken by earthly friends, there was One nigh unto me, who never let me be tempted above that I was able to bear. When earthly loves were removed out of my sight, He would come to me, even in the night watches, saying unto me, ‘ Fear not, little one, behold *I* have loved thee,’—‘ Am I not better to thee than ten friends?’ And then, when my soul was exceeding sorrowful, He gently poured balm into my wounds, and put His left hand under my head, whilst with His right hand He embraced me, calling me His child,—the lamb of His flock, for whom He had laid down His life. Thus was I supported; and thought the road over which I had to travel was very rough, yet the Beloved of my soul took me up with Him in th’ ‘ chariot paved with love,* which He had made for himself,’ that I might not be dismayed.

“ But how shall I confess to you, that, after all proofs of love and compassion which had been vouchsafed to me, I yet, like the disciples of old, forsook Saviour? Oh! Janette, my heart bleeds at the re-

* Cant. iii. 9, 10.

brance of this sin; and were it not that the blood of Christ cleanseth from ALL sin, I might well despair, after having displayed such detestable ingratitude to Him who had done so much for me.

“After many months had rolled away, I found the severity of my confinement lessened; and before long I was allowed to mix with my family, on condition of never introducing the subject of religion.

“When this change first took place, I felt the necessity of great watchfulness, lest I should be entangled before I was aware; but after a while this fear subsided, and a feeling of security arose in my soul, which made me too easily ensnared by the enemy. It is true, I continued to pray, but praying will not do without *watching*; and, had it not been for the pity of the Lord, his wandering sheep might have strayed yet further and further from the fold. Self-confidence took the place of simple trust in God; my own weakness was lost sight of, consequently, the strength of Christ was unsought for. This state of mind had continued a long time, and had increased so imperceptibly to me, blinded as I was by the want of self-knowledge; but so surely,—not only to the eye of Him who looketh on the heart, but even to outward observers,—that my friends began secretly to congratulate themselves, on the

progress which they naturally supposed I was making, towards the renunciation of my errors; and they confidently hoped, ere long, to receive me to their arms, as one who had been lost, but was found,—one who had been dead, but was alive again.

“Just at this crisis, the service of high mass was about to be performed; and, as was customary, notice was given that the family confessor would appoint a special confessional, previous to its celebration. This announcement was made one morning, when we were all sitting together; and I was somewhat startled, by my Uncle’s desiring me to follow him into his study, as he wished to converse with me. During this interview, he informed me that it was his wish I should see Father Leslie, in order that I might, in common with my sisters, be prepared for the festival.

“Surprised, beyond measure, at such a command, I begged my Uncle to remember our former conversations, from which it must be obvious to him, that I could not join in such a service.

“And now, for the first time, were my eyes opened to behold the extent of my departure from God. My Uncle’s answer pierced me to the heart, as he continued to remind me of one and another instance, in which I

perceived I had indeed wandered far, and left my first-love, in striving to serve God and mammon.

“Too much overcome with shame, to reply to accusations which I felt were true, I promised to see the priest, and quitted the room.

“With mourning and lamentation, I took a review of the past months; and the more I examined my own heart, the more confounded was I at its vileness and cowardice. My transgressions rose like mountains before me, and ‘my confusion covered me, for I had sinned against the Lord my God.’ Disquieted and oppressed, my heart could receive no comfort,—every word of love which came to my mind, was like a fresh dagger thrust into a bleeding wound, and I wondered how I could have dared to insult such grace. The more, however, I looked at my sad state, the further did I get from Him, whose blood could alone cleanse me from the backslidings which I deplored. Still I could not lift my eyes to the Cross, because there I saw a loving Friend wounded afresh by my sins, and put to an open shame by one of His professed servants.

“Whilst thus bowed down,—scarcely daring to cry, God be merciful to me a sinner,—an inexpressibly sweet voice seemed to whisper in my ear, ‘True, thou hast not

called on Me, oh, My wandering lamb; thou hast wearied Me, by thine iniquities; yet, I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions, for *Mine Own sake*, and will not remember thy sins. Return, oh backsliding one; I am the door of the fold, I will admit thee again to the green pastures. Behold Me!"

"At these words, I raised my weeping eyes, and, by faith, saw the bleeding Lamb of God. His side was pierced, and from that wound there came out a living stream, which had virtue enough to wash away sins of the deepest dye—even my sins: with a trembling heart I replied,—‘Behold, I come unto Thee, for Thou art the Lord my God;’ and then I was able to pour out my soul, in earnest cries, for strength to keep me in the right way, lest I should ever wander again.

"It was in the evening of this very day that I went into the wood, where you first observed me, and when you heard the renewed dedication which I then made myself, to my Heavenly Father. The dreaded interview with the confessor was before me; but I vowed, in strength of the Lord, that I would confess Him be men. I deeply felt my own weakness, but rejoice to know that the ‘Strength of Israel would not lie;’

would perform His own word, and give me ‘a mouth and wisdom that all my enemies should not be able to gainsay.’

“Exceedingly encouraged by the new proof of the compassionate love of God, in having directed your way to me, I met Father Leslie, the next morning, with a determined resolve to conceal nothing from him, and positively to refuse to attend mass.

“After, in vain, using every argument to overcome my obstinacy (as he called it), he commanded me to withdraw, saying, he should communicate what had passed to the Archbishop, and they would, together, decide on the best means of dealing with so confirmed a heretic. This, however, he has been unable to accomplish, as my Uncle had, on that very morning, left Edinburgh, on business of importance, which will detain him at least a week longer from home.

“The uncertainty of what is before me sometimes oppresses me; but yet I can say, ‘I am not careful concerning this matter; for my God, whom I serve, will, I know, be with me, in the midst of the burning fiery furnace,’ even as he was with his children of old.—”

Here Isabella paused,—but the wonderful proofs of

the Love of God, manifested in the account she had given me, occupied our thoughts and engaged our conversation until we were forced to separate.

The feeling of each heart was,—“It is the Love of God, and it is indeed marvellous in our eyes!”

CHAPTER VII.

"Sing to the Lord ! let harp, and lute, and voice,
Up to the expanding gates of heaven, rejoice,
Whilst the bright martyrs to their rest are borne,
Sing to the Lord ! their blood stained course is run,
And every head its diadem hath won,
Rich as the purple of the summer morn :
Sing the triumphant champions of their God,
While burn their mounting feet along the skyward road."

SEVERAL days passed before I was again able to meet Isabella Hamilton, and I felt much anxiety to know what had been decided respecting her. I found, however, when I next saw her, that nothing further had been settled, as the Archbishop had not yet returned home, and Father Leslie could not act without consulting his superior.

Finding such to be the case, I informed Isabella that I had received intelligence of a conventicle which was to be

held the following night, and asked if it would be possible for her to accompany me, and some other friends, to hear the preached Word of God. I represented to her the dangers to which we must be exposed; the possibility of being surprised by the enemy, and taken prisoners; but I found that all the difficulties attending such a step, were not allowed to weigh a moment in her mind, against the unspeakable joy of worshipping, for the first time in her life, with the people of God. She did not entertain a doubt of being able to make her escape unobserved, at the hour, and accordingly promised to meet me at the place I had named.

Thus far is the history of Isabella Hamilton, as compiled from the letters of Janette Douglas to her cousins in Italy. The remainder of the tale was furnished by one who frequently visited the two friends, and heard from their own lips the account of the midnight meeting they attended, in accordance with the determination expressed in Janette's last letter.

About eleven o'clock on a fine October night, the little

party sallied forth towards the retired spot, where their hungry souls were to be fed with the precious Word of God. They beguiled their way by speaking of Him whom their souls loved—in exhorting one another to follow yet more closely the light which had been revealed, and in encouraging each other to hold fast, to the end that no man might take their crown. They spoke of the martyrs who had gone before them—of their past sufferings and present triumphs, until the veil appeared, as it were, withdrawn, which separated this band of believers from the glorious company above; and a voice from on high seemed to say to each soul—“Be followers of them who through faith and patience do now inherit the promises.”

Thus conversing, they reached the valley where many of their friends were already assembled; and as each little group arrived at the spot, they were cordially welcomed by those fathers in Christ, who, on those occasions made it their business to cheer the desponding, encourage the faint hearted, and show brotherly love and kindness to all around them. Presently every voice was hushed, for the minister who was to perform the service was seen approaching the company. Isabella's eyes glanced towards the tall athletic figure which now stood

near her, and perceived in a moment that it was her friend Malcolm Buchanan, who had thus risked his life, in order to be the means of comforting and strengthening the persecuted children of God. He passed on without observing her, and took his station on the stone which served instead of a pulpit.

Every head was immediately uncovered, whilst Buchanan solemnly commended his hearers to the care and protection of their Almighty Father, in Whose name they had that night assembled.

When he first began, many an anxious eye might be seen looking earnestly to the hills which surrounded them, and watching with deepest interest every motion of the sentinels* which the bright moon-light enabled them to descry. But holy confidence, even in these trembling ones soon took the place of alarm, and every soul became so absorbed in communion with its Father, that when the prayer had ceased, not a tongue remained silent, and even the most fearful joined in the song of praise which followed—

* It was the custom in Scotland, when a conventicle was held in the open air, to have watchers on the hills, who, by an appointed signal, were to give notice of any approaching danger.

I.

In Thee, oh Lord, we put our trust,
Shamed let us never be ;
According to Thy righteousness,
Do Thou remember us.

II.

Bow down Thine ear to us, with speed,
Send us deliverance,
To save us, our strong Rock be Thou,
And our house of defence.

III.

Into Thine hands do we commit
Our spirits—for Thou art He
Oh Thou Jehovah, God of truth,
Thou hast redeemed us.

IV.

Our times are wholly in Thy hand,
Do Thou deliver us,
From their hands, that our enemies
And persecutors be.

V.

Thy countenance to shine do Thou
Upon thy servants make
Unto us give salvation
For Thy great mercies' sake.

VI.

Be of good courage, He strength
Into your hearts shall send,
All ye whose hope and confidence
Doth on the Lord depend.

Buchanan then addressed them from the words—"Fear
t little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to

give you the kingdom." In glowing terms he told them of their Saviour's love—of the care He had for the flock for which He laid down His life, and though for a season they might be cast down, and be exceeding sorrowful, yet that the time for deliverance was near at hand; though now encompassed with darkness, yet light was already sown for them, and would soon spring up into a joyful harvest;—and then he showed them what they were suffering for, and what the end would be; what was the glory of that kingdom that the Father would give them, when they should be kings and priests, and reign for ever and ever; and then he besought them to fight the good fight of faith, and press forward to the mark for the prize of their high calling in Christ Jesus.

And now the hills again resounded with the song of praise, which burst from the lips of the worshippers :

I.

We to the hills will lift our eyes
From whence doth come our aid,
Our safety cometh from the Lord
Who heaven and earth hath made.

II.

Our feet He'll not let slide, nor will
He slumber that us keeps;
Behold! He that keeps Israel,
He slumbers not, nor sleeps.

III.

The Lord us keeps ; the Lord our shade
On our right hand doth stay
The moon by night, us shall not amite,
Nor yet the sun by day.

IV.

The Lord shall keep our souls ; He shall
Preserve us from all ill ;
Henceforth our going out and in
God keep for ever will !

Before this song had died away among the hills, sounds of a very different nature attracted the attention of the devoted little band ; they heard the trampling of horses, and on looking up, saw that they were almost surrounded by the cavalry of their enemies !

In vain had the sentinels given the customary signals, in intimation of approaching danger ; they had been unperceived by the people in the valley ; and now all hope of escape seemed gone. One little mountain path, however, remained of which the enemy had not yet taken possession, and this was the only door of hope which presented itself. All who could reach that pass would be in comparative safety, because there the horses could not follow them.

All eyes were turned on Buchanan, and young and old besought him to fly whilst there was time ; *but this faith-*

ful shepherd would not leave any of his flock in the day of adversity. Many there were, who were too infirm to seize upon the only possible way of escape; and some of the younger, who had lent their strength to their aged friends, in order that their tottering steps might reach the place where prayer was to be made, would not now desert their beloved relatives when they were about to suffer in the cause of Christ. Amongst this number was Janette Douglas; she had an aged Uncle—her father in Christ—amongst that group of worshippers. Old and feeble, he needed all the support which his child could bestow, and he clung to her love and her sympathy, as all the earthly treasure which now remained to him. She would not forsake him, and Isabella determined rather to die than to leave her dear friend.

The moments which elapsed before the soldiers poured down upon them, were spent by Buchanan in exhorting the little group that remained by him to stand fast; not to be cast down, but to profess a good profession, and to fear none of those things which they should suffer. Having recognized Isabella, he addressed himself to her, but his words were only audible to herself, from the clatter of hoofs, which now came close to them, and deadened all other sounds. They were immediately separated, to

hold converse no more, until perfect and faultless, they stood together before the throne of God ; and united their voices in praising the riches of redeeming love.

In a few moments, the valley was cleared, and those whose ears had so lately been refreshed by the sound of the Gospel, were now condemned to hear the oaths and blasphemies of their persecutors, as they hurried them up the steep ascent.

Remembering the example of their Lord, these patient sufferers being reviled, reviled not again, and answered not to all the taunts and reproaches heaped on them. The dreadful moment soon arrived, when, on reaching Edinburgh, husbands were to be torn from wives, children from parents, and friend from friend ; and that, too, at the very moment when they seemed most to cling to the sympathies so dear and precious to them.

“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you,” was a promise sweetly fulfilled in this hour of need ; and not a single repining word was heard, as one and another took the last sad gaze at the friends who were, for aught they could tell, to be removed from them for ever, in this vale of tears. By the singular providence of God, Janette and Isabella were not separated from each other. The youth of Fife, who were to be separated from their friends, were to be separated from their friends, and the youth of Fife, who were to be separated from their friends, were to be separated from their friends.

prison, on account of the numbers who were continually seized on the charge of heresy, was now overflowing, but one small cell remained, in which the two friends could be placed. This circumstance, which seemed accidental, did not fail to excite deep thankfulness in their hearts, to Him who had thus "remembered mercy."

It was soon discovered that Isabella was the niece of Archbishop Hamilton, and every means were used to induce her to renounce her faith in Christ, and return to the religion in which she had been educated. In vain did her Uncle and her Mother visit her cell, and beseech her, by all that was tender and endearing, not to bring down their grey hairs in sorrow to the grave, by persevering in that which must ensure a heavy punishment in this world and everlasting perdition in the next. But all entreaties and threats were alike in vain; the conflict was terrible, but Isabella came off more than conqueror, through the might of Him Who is able to succour the tempted.

The continual excitement of these harassing visits together with the close confinement of the prison, and many deprivations to which she was subjected, affected her health; and had it not been for the watchful and soothing care of her friend, she would have speedily sunk under these trials.

The strong mind of Janette seemed to rise, in proportion to the weight of the trials she endured. Her faith was firmly fixed, on a risen and living Saviour; and she was enabled to rejoice in His love, even when clouds and darkness were round about Him.

Moments of such high and holy communion were vouchsafed to her, that, at times, she seemed already in the immediate presence of her Saviour; and Isabella listened with wonder to her words, and perceived, even with trembling, how evidently and rapidly she was ripening for glory. Had Isabella known before, that in Janette were already sown the seeds of a fearful disease, to the ravages of which many of her nearest relatives had fallen victims, she would not have wondered to see her eyes lighted with so unearthly a radiance, or her cheeks glow as with the flush of health. Janette, however, was not deceived; she felt that her days were numbered, and earnestly desired that she might be enabled, in the few that should yet remain, to prepare the mind of her friend for the bitter trial which was before her. This was a difficult and painful task, but Janette received strength to accomplish it, and Isabella's distracted heart at length realized the mournful truth, that, very soon, those eyes which then beamed on her in love, must be sealed in death.

The close of another week, which found Janette much nearer to her eternal home, brought with it an answer to her oft-repeated prayers; and she saw that at length, Isabella had been enabled to bow with submission to the heavy stroke, and calmly to say, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to Thy word." Then did her heart rejoice exceedingly, and she exclaimed, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace." All was joy to the soul of the dying saint, and the language of praise was continually on her lips. She spoke of all the great things the Lord had done for them; and drew, from the remembrance of His past faithfulness, motives of earnest and simple trust in all that might yet await them. The hour of separation, it was true, was drawing very nigh; but Isabella was able to rejoice that ere long she too would join the ransomed spirit of her friend, in glory everlasting.

Malcolm Buchanan had already won the martyr's crown; they had heard in the Castle court-yard the noise of the procession which led him to the stake; they knew that death, in its most terrific form, had no terror for his soul; and feelings of gratitude arose in their hearts, that he had been thus counted worthy to suffer, for the sake

of the Lord Jesus. The report of his unshaken constancy, and even triumphant joy, amidst the flames, had been brought to them by Margaret Craig, who, in spite of all the danger attending such a step, had continued, not only to visit her young lady, but had secretly furnished her with many little comforts, which tended much to alleviate the sufferings of her dying friend.

Isabella and Janette delighted to perceive that the prejudices of the old woman were much shaken, and that she would listen to them with pleasure, when they spoke to her of their Saviour; though she had not yet ventured to confess, even to them, how precious the Name which is above every name had become to her soul.

Accustomed as she had been to sickness, Margaret saw that Janette was sinking fast, and she rejoiced to minister to her comfort in every possible way. The sweet patience and heavenly composure of the sufferer, so reminded her of her own young lady, that she often said, she could fancy she had got Miss Adamina again, for "Miss Douglas smiled on her just as she used to do, and never complained of anything."

But whilst Janette was thus sinking, the report was sent to the tribunal in Edinburgh, that their prisoner was

not likely long to survive; and being unwilling to lose so good an opportunity of wreaking their vengeance upon one of the members of pastor Douglas's family—towards whom they bore a particular spite,—they resolved that Janette should be immediately executed.

As soon as Margaret learnt that this decision was made, she determined herself to communicate it to the two friends, as she hoped thus to spare Isabella the agony of a too sudden announcement.

Janette and Isabella were so intently engaged in conversation when she entered the cell, that they did not notice the opening of the door, and Margaret being unwilling to disturb them, sat down in silence. The little window of the cell overlooked a lovely prospect, and they were watching the last rays of the setting sun as they gilded the distant hills, and were speaking of that time when their sun should no more go down in darkness. "Oh, Isabella," exclaimed Janette, who seemed *already* to have partly entered within the veil, and to have caught transporting views of the glories of which she was so soon to be a partaker. "How long the time appears which separates me from my Lord. Oh that His chariot would come faster. I long to be with Him—to see Him *face to face*, and to love Him with all the powers of my soul!"

" Whom have I in the heavens high
But Thee, O Lord, alone ?
And in the earth, whom I desire
Besides Thee,—there is none.

My flesh and heart doth faint and fail,
But God doth fail me never ;
For of my heart God is the strength,
And portion for ever."

She turned round and perceived Margaret, whose sorrowful countenance betrayed that she was the bearer of evil tidings. Janette's eyes brightened with joy as the old woman gently told her tale; but one glance at Isabella filled them with tears, and made her feel, that for *her* sake she could be willing to live on, even in suffering and pain.

Isabella murmured not—she knew that this stroke was necessary for her; and whilst her heart died within her as she felt that in a few short hours she should see the face of that beloved friend no more on earth,—from her inmost soul she exclaimed, " Thy will, oh God, be done !"

The solemn night was passed in ardent thanksgiving for all the loving-kindness which they had so constantly experienced at the hand of the Lord, as well as in earnest supplications for her who was to sojourn yet longer in the vale of tears. Janette soothed her agitated friend; she bid her be of good cheer—and reminded her that the

time was not far distant when she should have the joy of hailing her arrival in the world of light. "Lean more on your blessed Saviour, dearest," said she, gently kissing Isabella's pale cheek, "He will not fail you, nor forsake you; He has never given you cause for anything but confidence in Him—and what He *has* been that He will ever be. He will manifest Himself to your soul, and comfort you with abundant consolations."

Then turning to Margaret, who had remained with them during the night, she thanked her for all her tender kindness, and for the last time commended the Saviour to her.

Thus the hours wore away, and the morning sun rose for the last time on Janette Douglas. A little while more, and she was with the Source of light and love.

The day had not far advanced before Janette was torn from the embrace of her weeping friend, and borne on a litter to the place of execution. Being too weak to stand alone, she was supported to the scaffold, and in a few moments her happy spirit was sent from its sickly tenement to the land where the inhabitant shall not say, "I am sick,"—"neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Now was the time for Margaret to prove that the good

seed which had been sown, had, indeed, sprung up and produced an abundant harvest. She sat by the side of her bereaved young lady and poured into her desolate heart those heavenly consolations, which could alone soothe her in that hour of woe. And rejoiced was she to find that her labour was not in vain. Isabella's attention was awakened, and a feeling of deep gratitude even then arose within her, that God had so graciously answered her prayers, as well as those of her now glorified friend, on behalf of the old woman.

Worn out with long continued watching, Isabella at length fell into a deep sleep, and the thoughtful Margaret took this opportunity of so arranging the room that her dear young lady, on awaking, might not be startled with its sadly vacant appearance. She then sat down by the couch and earnestly entreated that the strength and composure so needful, might be vouchsafed to her whom she loved as her own child. Her prayer was answered, and Isabella was enabled to part with Margaret, (when it became necessary that she should leave her,) with comparative calmness.

But if the prison presented such a scene of sorrow, and the hearts of those confined within its walls, were torn by separation from their dearest friends, *much less*

of peace was there to be found in the palace of the bigoted Archbishop Hamilton. Soon after Janette's removal he had again visited his niece in her solitary cell, and once more tried to compel her to abjure her faith in Christ. He offered her, on the one hand, riches and honour, the esteem and affection of those she loved; whilst, on the other side, he placed before her sufferings and death. He assured her that she need not expect from him any milder treatment; for that he felt the disgrace she had brought on his family too deeply, to attempt to screen her from justice. Finding his own efforts were unsuccessful, he had also brought to her her mother, brothers, and sisters, who, by every fond entreaty, sought to induce their beloved Isabella to return with them, and once more diffuse happiness and joy through their circle.

They set before her the dreadful death which it had been determined she should suffer if she should still refuse to return to the true faith; and then they clung to her with the most painful tenderness and wept over her. Poor Annette was of the number, and the sight of *her* pale and care-worn countenance, sent an arrow more full of poison to her Sister's heart, than all the tortures the enemy could have inflicted.

In six troubles had the Lord been with Isabella, and now in the seventh, and greatest, He would not forsake her. Her heart was wrung with anguish as she looked upon those beloved relatives with all a daughter's and a sister's love; and felt how bitter a trial it was to be the cause of such woe to those so precious to her. She lifted up her aching heart in earnest prayer, and immediately received the strength she needed to deliver once more her unflinching testimony to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus, for which she had been made willing to renounce her friends and her life. With breathless anxiety her friends had awaited her answer, and now sorrow and indignation filled their minds, as they started back from her, scarcely believing the words which they heard. Her gentle Mother and Annette alone continued to cling to her, and besought her for the love she bore them, to spare them the agony of parting with her.

"Oh my beloved friends," exclaimed Isabella, with a bursting heart, "do not thus distress me by your love. The Saviour has said, 'Whoso loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.' I have vowed unto the Lord and I cannot go back. O cease, I beseech you, to urge me further." Her sobs choked her utter-

ance, and she fell on Annette's neck, overpowered by excessive agitation.

A few moments only was she allowed to rest there, but she seized this precious and last opportunity, to whisper some words of love and of solemn entreaty to her sweet Sister, whom she earnestly desired should be led into the way of peace. She begged her to search the Scriptures, and directed her to the secret depository where her own Bible lay concealed. A promise was given by Annette that she would read it, but whether her eyes were opened to believe its blessed truths, and to follow in the path which her friend and her sisters had trodden, is not known, and must therefore remain a secret until "the day shall declare it."

The Archbishop dreading the influence which this trying scene was likely to produce on the young people, commanded them to withdraw. Annette was the last to leave the cell; indeed, it was only by force that she could be compelled to relinquish her grasp of her beloved Sister. The door was closed upon her weeping friends, and Isabella was left to the solitude of her cell. "When my father and mother forsake me," she exclaimed in an agony, "then the Lord will take me up!" and she felt all the peace and comfort of that blessed assurance.

Her relatives returned to their sad home, and Margaret soon learned that her dear young lady's doom was sealed. In vain had been all the tender entreaties and expostulations of his Sister and her children; the Archbishop had determined that no partiality should be shown towards his niece, and in this resolve he remained immoveable.

It was asserted by some that the prelate had indulged a hope, that at the last, when the terrors of the execution were actually before her eyes, Isabella would recant; and, that had he been aware of her firmness, he would not so readily have consented to her murder. Be this as it may, it is certain that Archbishop Hamilton gained much honour and credit amongst the Roman Catholic party, for thus punishing with extreme severity every case of glaring heresy, and for not hesitating to sacrifice even a near relative, when she was convicted of that crime.

But the decision which caused such sorrow to her family was a source of unfeigned joy to Isabella, and she waited with eagerness for the day in which her name should be enrolled amongst "the noble army of martyrs."

Thousands of spectators crowded to the spot, and gazed with deep emotion on the young and beautiful creature who was led forth to execution.

Isabella was unmoved; followed by the faithful Margaret, she walked with a firm step to the scaffold, and from thence addressed herself to some who stood near, whom she had known from infancy, and who now pressed forward to take the last look at one whom their eyes would no more behold.

She told them how bright her hopes were, and exhorted them to seek salvation alone through the merits of her Saviour Jesus Christ the Righteous.

Then embracing Margaret, she calmly bared her neck for the stroke of the executioner, and exclaimed with ecstatic joy, "Oh death where is thy sting!—Oh grave where is thy victory!"—This song of triumph, which was thus begun on earth was finished in glory;—for a moment more, and the heavenly arches rang with the conqueror's voice, as she cast her crown before the feet of her Saviour, exclaiming, "Thanks be to God, which HATH GIVEN me the victory, through my Lord Jesus Christ!"

Margaret had received the last expression of love from her dear young lady,—she had caught her last smile of grateful affection,—and now her bursting heart could contain itself no longer;—she faintly cried, "O my *Saviour*, take me too!" That prayer was graciously

answered, and her freed spirit heard a voice, sweeter than any voice of the sons of men, saying unto her, "I was sick, and thou visitedst Me,—I was in prison, and thou camest unto Me. Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of these My brethren, thou hast done it unto ME. Come thou blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."



